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## HOUSE APPROVES DEFENSE FUNDS TO HELP AMERICAN PLASTICS DEVELOP SAFER MILITARY RATION PACKAGING

WASHINGTON, D.C. â€“ Seventh District Congressman Dave Obey (D-WI) announced today that the U.S. House of Representatives has approved his request for \$3 million in next year's budget for the Department of Defense to help the American Plastics company â€“ which has a plant in Rhinelander â€“ continue to work with the Army to develop better packaging for military rations.

â€œThe packaging being developed in Rhinelander will help the U.S. Army ensure that our troops are provided with safe, fresh and accessible rations,â€” said Obey. â€œAs we've seen in Iraq and around the world, nutrition is key to a soldier's performance and keeping soldiers fed is a real challenge. The folks at American Plastics in Rhinelander are playing an important part in making sure that challenge is met.â€”

The U.S. Combat Feeding Program, which is responsible for innovations in the supply chain that keep our military fed in the field, needs a non-foil material that is a barrier to moisture, oxygen and penetration yet capable of tolerating the changes in temperature, flexing, folding and rough treatment that is common in the military logistics system and on the battlefield.

American Plastics is developing nanocomposite materials that will fill that role, using anti-microbial agents and moisture and odor absorbing properties to keep food appealing and extend shelf-life. The materials will also incorporate tamper evident qualities to protect against food sabotage and to detect punctures that can cause rations to spoil.

The budget for the Defense Department was passed by the House over the weekend. It must still be approved by the Senate and signed by the President before it becomes law. “But having this project included in the House approved version means that a major hurdle has been cleared,” Obey concluded.

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